

**Frederick County Ethics Commission**  
**Minutes for the Public Meeting of Tuesday, December 9, 2014**

Present: Gwen Romack, Chair  
Brian Duncan, Vice Chair  
R. Carl Benna, Commission Member  
C. Steven Snow, Commission Member  
Beverly Freed, Alternate Commission Member  
Linda B. Thall, Senior Assistant County Attorney

Absent: Stephen Starliper, Commission Member

Ms. Romack called to order a meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission at 6:30 p.m. on December 9, 2014, in the County Attorney's law library on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701.

**Approval of the meeting minutes from the October 14, 2014 meeting** – The minutes from the October 14, 2014 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

**Continuation of discussion of recommended changes to the Ethics Ordinance** – The Commission members discussed whether the ethics ordinance could be amended to address personal relationships with subordinate employees and, if not, whether a recommendation should be made to the County for adoption of a policy to address personal relationships between County officials and employees where one person has influence over the other person's pay, benefits, or performance evaluations. The Commission decided to recommend changes to the Ethics Ordinance to increase the penalty provisions and provide funding for outside counsel to represent the Commission when the County Attorney's Office has a conflict of interest. The Ethics Commission will also request additional budget funds. The Commission's recommendations will be sent to the County Executive and the County Council. In addition, the Commission also wants to be more involved in the process of selecting new members of the Commission, returning to a prior practice of allowing the Ethics Commission to review applications, conduct interviews as necessary, and make a recommendation to the County Executive for the appointment. The Commission then discussed changes to its website and Standard Operating Procedures to provide more clarity on the requirements for filing ethics complaints.

**Decision to meet to perform an administrative function** – The Commission members agreed unanimously to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss a pending complaint.

**Required information regarding the administrative function meeting** – The Commission began its administrative function meeting at approximately 7:20 p.m. on

September 3, 2014, in the County Attorney's Law Library on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701. Present for the meeting were Ms. Romack, Mr. Duncan, Mr. Benna, Mr. Snow, Ms. Freed and Senior Assistant County Attorney Michael Chomel. The Commission members discussed a complaint alleging violation of the Ethics Ordinance and directed Mr. Chomel to draft a decision on the complaint consistent with the guidance provided by the Commission.

### **Adjournment**

The Ethics Commission adjourned its meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

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/s/  
Linda B. Thall, Senior Assistant County Attorney